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Sowler, Robert S.

The general election in the great centres of population

London

[1869]

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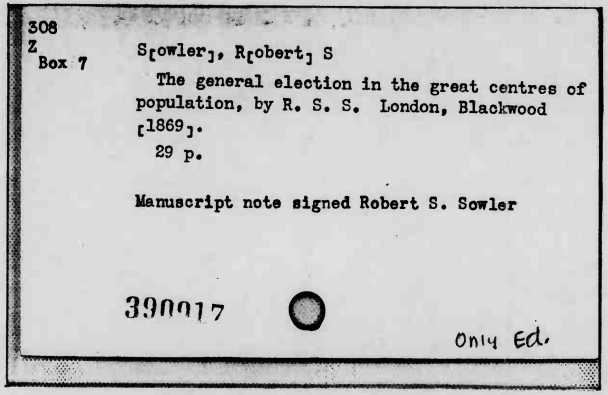

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The general election in the great centres of population, by R. S. S. London, Blackwood [1869].

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The Right Honorable
Sir Stafford H. Northcote Bart M.P. C.B
with Robert K. Soames's Compliments.

THE

GENERAL

ELECTION

IN THE

GREAT CENTRES

OF

POPULATION.

BY

R. S. S.

LONDON:
WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS,
37, Paternoster Row.

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THE GENERAL ELECTION

IN THE

GREAT CENTRES OF POPULATION.

Now that the great battle is over, and the two parties in the State have counted their gains and losses, it may be interesting as well as instructive to take note how the Constituencies that have been so greatly enlarged by the new Reform Acts have acquitted themselves of their trust.* The subject has been dealt with already in a general way by the press, and the reader is already in possession of a series of results arising out of the recent exercise of the franchise in the great centres of population, of the highest significance and of the most promising character for the future integrity of the Constitution. It may however be very useful, for contemplation at this time, and for reference hereafter, to devote a few pages to the special purpose of placing on record, in a detailed shape, the most prominent incidents of the appeal to the country, last November, — leaving for separate treatment in another form hereafter, those momentous questions touching the institutions of the country, which, perforce, must be dealt with by the party now in a numerical ascendancy in the House of Commons.

For a long series of years, that "great *United* Liberal party," which has suddenly signalised itself as the party of Church Spoliation, has never missed an opportunity of dinning into our ears that which it is pleased to call a "great fact,"— the fact, namely, that ever since the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 the policy of this country, foreign and domestic, must depend upon, and be ultimately shaped by, the opinion and action of the great centres

* This paper only deals with the actual results of the November election, as shewing at that time the general feeling of the country — especially among the newly-enfranchised classes. The decisions arrived at by the judges on the trial of election petitions must be taken into account hereafter.

of population, — meaning thereby the Metropolitan counties and boroughs, and the counties and boroughs in the great commercial and manufacturing districts of the North. The rural populations were not only ignored but insulted. There was but one condition of worth or intelligence in the "Liberal" classification of all who were engaged in rural pursuits. They were "clod-heads," "clay-polls," "chawbacons," and so they remain to this hour, — unless they can be induced to return Liberals to Parliament. It seems, however, that just now a considerable number of rural boroughs are in much better odour than they were only a few months ago, for it has happened that the smaller constituencies, where influence ("Liberal" influence) can best be brought to bear, have contributed most materially to swell the Radical majority in the House of Commons, while the great constituencies have, in a most remarkable manner, declared themselves in favour of sound Constitutional principles, and therefore right in the teeth of the Spoliators.

Mr. Disraeli and his followers have never had credit given them for that sincerity which springs from conviction when they have declared that the party of the constitution, of all others, has least cause to dread the consequences of a wide extension of the elective franchise. It was vain to appeal to old traditions and the indisputable facts of a past history. If it were suggested that Pitt was minister for decades of years when the franchise was exercised by freemen by birth and apprenticeship, by scot and lot voters, and "potwallopers," — a state of things as near universal suffrage as might be — the invariable answer was: "Ah, that's all very fine, but the population has trebled and quadrupled since that time, and there was nothing like the same independence and cultivated intelligence among the working classes in the great populous centres of industry; just try your hand now — if you dare." Well, we have tried our hand. We have "descended" to household suffrage, guarded by the just and wholesome proviso which makes the payment of rates an indispensable condition precedent to the exercise of the franchise, and we glory in that result which shall now be displayed to the reader.

Scotland shall be passed over at once, a veil being tenderly drawn over that incomprehensible aberration which, one may suppose, for lack of a just appreciation of the peril in which Church Establishments have been placed by Mr. Gladstone and his followers, has induced or enabled her to turn upon her best and truest friends—her

foremost men, her wisest and most responsible councillors. From the united Presbyterians and Cameronians one could expect nothing except that in their blind hatred of all establishments they would follow the old Covenanting leaders like sheep. It is preferable just now to confine one's vision to this side of the Border, and observe how the masses of the English population have made use of their newly-acquired privileges. We are bound in all duty and respect to take the metropolitan constituencies first in order. Here, then, is the great county of Middlesex. The Tory Reform Act pretty well doubled the constituency, and no true Liberal could ever have supposed that the sweet traditions of a generation, in which so abiding a security was felt, would or could be rudely broken through, and a Tory admitted to the fold. And yet a Tory, and a young Tory too, did get in, and established himself with the approbation of a majority of nearly fourteen hundred votes over his Liberal opponent. Here is the official declaration of the poll: —

Lord Geo. T. Hamilton (C)	7,638
Lord Enfield (R)	6,387
Mr. Labouchere (R)	6,297

The excuse for this crushing defeat put forward by the Radical press was that Mr. Labouchere lost his seat because he "lost his temper" and quarrelled with his party. Did Lord Enfield come in "a bad second," — to borrow a turf phrase, — from the same cause? The common impression in London is that temper had so little to do with the matter that if young Lord George Hamilton had been coupled with a colleague of like principles both the Liberals must have gone to the right-about, for Lord Enfield himself was more than twelve hundred behind his Conservative opponent. One may suppose it would be utterly impossible to hammer into the heads of the party of Church spoliators even a suspicion that their principles and their policy have filled the intelligent masses of the community with distrust and even alarm. But indeed it is so, and this is a truth that will be forced more and more upon Mr. Gladstone and his abettors as time advances. Oh! but those who have derived from the lessons of history any true knowledge of the character of Englishmen, well know how perilous a thing it is to attach their devotion to that reformed (*restored*) faith of which the Established Church is the sacred depository.

Next comes the mighty and puissant City of London. Before

the writer indulges in what Mr. Gladstone elegantly terms "the scratch of a pen," let him present the official return of the Poll :—

Goschen (R)	6,520
Crawford (R)	6,258
Lawrence (R)	6,215
Bell (C)	6,130
Twells (C)	6,099
Gibbons (C)	6,013
Rothschild (R)	5,995

Be it understood that for a quarter of a century or so no Conservative has been returned for the City, — although, until last November, the constituency was comparatively small. Mr. Masterman, the banker, was the last Conservative member. The enlarged constituency returns a Conservative, and he polls something less than four hundred votes within Mr. Goschen, the highest Radical candidate, and only 85 within the number polled by the Lord Mayor who is the lowest of the three Radicals. Nor is this all that can be said. Up to within a very short time before the close of the poll, it was understood throughout the City that two of the Conservatives, Mr. Bell and Mr. Twells, had beaten their opponents. And, it will be perceived, not without reason, for Mr. Twells only polled 31 short of his Conservative colleague. Well might the City Radicals quake in their shoes and cower before the "situation" — as we are assured they did. Good reason have the party of the Constitution to rejoice at this splendid reaction. Rothschild, too, with all the "money power" at his back, at the bottom of the poll! There is, indeed, great significance in this triumph of the City Conservatives. Not only will it have shaken the confidence of Mr. Goschen and his confreres, but it will give buoyancy and pluck and courage to the Conservatives to go on and persevere and wrest the grand old City from the hands that still hold it in a political thraldom. Best of all, this grand result was won by that greater and more democratic constituency that has been given to the City by Conservative statesmen.

Perhaps, however, the most significant triumph that was achieved during the late contest was the return, by an enormous majority, at the head of the poll, of Mr. W. H. Smith, the eminent newsvender, in the contest for Westminster. At the previous General Election Mr. Smith was beaten — though not "shamefully beaten,"—as it is confessed his opponents were in November. In a greatly enlarged constituency he was elected by a majority of 813 over the Hon. R. Grosvenor, the son of the Marquis of

Westminster, — the owner of a vast property and possessed of great influence in that quarter of the metropolis, — and of 1,513 over the great Radical philosopher and dictator, Mr. John Stuart Mill. The numbers, as officially declared, stood thus : —

W. H. Smith (C)	7,698
Hon. R. Grosvenor (R)	6,885
J. S. Mill (R)	6,185

It is hardly necessary to say that the Radical prints and the Radical party were thunderstruck. If a Shrapnell shell had dropped through the ceiling on to the table of the Reform League it could not have produced greater consternation. In their bewilderment, the "great United" immediately began to fumble about for excuses and palliatives ; but "*Væ victis*"! they could find nothing that would answer the purpose. To be sure, Mr' Smith had been "actively at work" ever since the previous election. To be sure he had. He helped, among other things, to organise that now powerful body of hard-working and intelligent artizans, "The Westminster Working Men's Conservative Association." He presided at the anniversary meeting held in Willis's Rooms in the spring of last year. The hall was crammed almost to suffocation. He exhorted these men to preserve the happiness, safety, and welfare of themselves and the country by a loyal adherence to the Constitution in Church and State ; and a thousand voices told him that as soon as they were in the enjoyment of the franchise they would return him for Westminster at the head of the poll, — and they have done it, and will do it again and again. A "learned gentleman" connected with Lancashire told these men something else. He told them that at the next then ensuing election Mr. Gladstone would not be returned for Lancashire — and that has come true also. Now, these men of Westminster, acting upon a firm conviction of what was just and right and wholesome, went among those of their own order and pushed it home to their thoughtful intelligence that the wisest and best thing a man could do to protect the hard-won fruits of his thrift and industry, and secure his own happiness and that of his fellows, was to give a loyal support to those tried institutions under which he lived. That's the way in which Westminster was won. And it is the sure and certain way in which scores of other great constituencies will be won ere many years have elapsed. Well, but what about poor Stuart Mill, the "guide, philosopher, and friend" of the "great United," and whilom their dictator general — self-

elected ? With astounding arrogance, he ordered Mr. Bouverie to vacate the Kilmarnock Burghs in order to make room for a "better man" in the person of Mr. Edwin Chadwick, of Poor-Law celebrity. Mr. Bouverie had had the audacity to say in his place in the House that the Liberal party was not properly led (by Mr. Gladstone), and that it was little better than a "rabble." That was the main cause of offence. Mr. Bouverie convicted Mr. Mill of having also said something vastly like it himself, cast Mr. Mill's insufferable arrogance in his teeth, and refused to budge at his bidding. Mr. Mill tried on the same sort of modest assurance with one or two others, but with no better success. Mr. Bouverie beat Mr. Edwin Chadwick by more than two to one — polling 2,892 to Mr. Chadwick's 1,146 — and Mr. Mill found himself deplorably low at the very bottom of the Westminster poll. He is now a "wandering star," but by no means of the "first magnitude." Being "out in the cold," and having a good deal of spare time on his hands, he has taken to amusing himself by writing letters from the Continent to his late constituents, in which he pleasantly, and rather conceitedly, informs them that he has returned to avocations more "congenial" to *him* than representing *them*. Well, well, — "the grapes are sour"! and, — let us turn our attention from glorious Westminster to other quarters scarcely, if any thing, less interesting.

For a great many years past it has been the invariable habit of the "Liberal" party to turn to the great centres of population devoted to the pursuits of commerce and manufactures in the North of England whenever they have met with reverses in other parts of the country. It has been their custom to say, that, next to the metropolis itself, (of course, always excepting Birmingham, — the old forcing-house of Radical enterprise,) the intelligence of the country lay in these Northern parts. Upon the men of the North they conferred a sort of political apotheosis. They worshipped them. They followed them with unstinted applause and the most fulsome adulation. With the exceptions already named, almost all the rest of the country were dolts, and, as Mr. Bright once said of Lord Palmerston in his lifetime, "obstructive of all progress." The other month, before the Lancashire elections had fairly set in, they reclaimed and reapplied an apothegm which Lord Salisbury borrowed from the late Sir Robert Peel and made use of in a speech delivered at an entertainment given to him by the Manchester Chamber of Commerce : "What Lancashire thinks to-day all England thinks to-morrow." They were not prepared

to say that, ten days later, or even to tolerate the bare idea ; for it came to pass that she "disgraced" herself at the election. The way in which she made use of her divisions of the county, of her new boroughs, and of her vastly enlarged constituencies was to return twenty-two Conservatives to Parliament against only eleven Liberals; whereas, at the General Election of 1865, when the constituencies were comparatively small, things went just the other way. In 1865 there were two divisions of the county (North and South Lancashire) returning five members — three Conservatives, and two Liberals. The new Reform Act split up the county into four divisions (North, North-East, South-East, and South-West), returning eight members ; and in November last the whole eight members returned were Conservatives ; and Mr. Gladstone, the "Lancashire Man," — as he loved to call himself when the election was pending, but *not* after it was over, — may, without a very violent effort of the imagination, be supposed to have muttered to himself, after he and his friends had been soundly beaten, the exclamation of "Clinia" in the "Heauton-timorumenos" of Terence : —

——— "Væ misero mihi, quanta
"de spe decidi !"

His friends of the press, and not of the press, mourned also ; but the former soon waxed indignant and began, like their metropolitan brethren, to do as already described : fumble about for excuses and palliatives. When a Conservative was returned by an enormous majority at the head of the poll for Manchester, and two Conservatives were returned for the adjacent borough of Salford (which may be said to be a part of Manchester — just as Southwark is a part of London —) there was great despondency. When Mr. Milner Gibson was cast out of Ashton-under-Lyne and a Conservative put in his place this despondency sensibly deepened. Then came the ejectment of Lord Hartington from North Lancashire, which made the gloom more oppressive than ever. But the "great united" had not yet sounded the lowest depth. Mr. Gladstone himself was ejected from South-West Lancashire ; and then the Manchester Radical print, the special organ of Bright and Gladstone, broke out into this lament : "Still another defeat, and this time the greatest of all. South-West Lancashire has rejected Mr. Gladstone. It would be idle to conceal our disappointment or to stifle our regret." The day but one afterwards came the news of the defeat of Mr. F. Peel and Mr. H. G. Thompson in South-East

Lancashire, (Manchester division of the county) by prodigious majorities; and then the same journal spoke out in this-wise: "The Tory triumph is now complete in Lancashire, and the 'blue flag' has no more divisions to fight in this County. Let us admit to the fullest extent the failure of our expectations. *The Tories have swept the county of Lancaster*, and that is the extent of their gain." Well, not quite. The boroughs had been "swept" by the Tories in a disagreeable manner, also. But perhaps the best course will be to take these northern constituencies in the order of their elections — beginning with the county elections.

North (or North-West) Lancashire led the van. The candidates were Colonel Wilson-Patten, Chief Secretary for Ireland, the Marquis of Hartington, a member of Lord Russell's last administration, (the two "old members" for North Lancashire) and the Hon. Frederic Arthur Stanley (the second son of Lord Derby) a junior Lord of the Admiralty, who sat for Preston in the last Parliament. There had not been a contest in North Lancashire for a century and a half — stretching into that period when the whole of Lancashire was undivided and represented by only two members, a scion of the House of Stanley being almost always one of the two. [The present Lord Derby, when Mr. Stanley, sat for the County for many years.] For considerably more than thirty years the representation had been divided between representatives of the two great parties, — Colonel Wilson-Patten having sat for forty years. Now the Conservative party were intimately persuaded that if they chose to make the attempt they were strong enough to carry both members, although the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Hartington's father, had a seat at Holkar Hall, Cartmel, and was possessed of large property in the neighbourhood — at Barrow, where the great iron mines are, at Ulverston, and other places on the shores of Morecambe Bay; and when Lord Hartington declared his adherence to Mr. Gladstone, on the Irish Church question, and voted for the "resolutions," the Conservative electors determined to contest the representation, and sent a powerful requisition to Mr. F. A. Stanley, with which, after much consideration, he complied, and became Lord Hartington's opponent. Of course, the Liberals boasted prodigiously of their strength, as is their wont, and put the "screw" on the small farmers wherever they could do it slyly and with moderate safety. But the returns of a canvass conducted with scrupulous care soon convinced the Conservatives that they would carry their men by large majorities. Mr. Stanley's

principal strength lay in and about Preston, where his family has considerable property, and this was a fair set-off to 'the Duke" on the shores of Morecambe. For the rest, the electors took the matter into their own hands. It was thought that the Liberals were conscious of weakness, when Lord Hartington was obliged to confess at the nomination at Lancaster that on the next evening Mr. Gladstone himself would stand at his side and advocate his claims, at Preston. It was generally supposed that the Right Hon. Gentleman's hands were sufficiently full of his own affairs in South-West Lancashire. But he was evidently under a delusion, for he then declared that if faith could be put in anything "human" he should certainly be one of the members for Lancashire by that day week. How vain are these "human" hopes and "certainties"! Within the week, both he and his friend and former colleague were "out in the cold" as far as Lancashire was concerned. As for Lord Hartington, his defeat was so crushing that it is hardly likely the Duke of Devonshire will spend his tens of thousands again in an effort to make an impression on North Lancashire. At all events, one would think so after going over this official statement of the poll at its close: —

Hon. F. A. Stanley (C)	6,832
Col. Wilson-Patten (C)	6,681
Lord Hartington (R)	5,296

giving a majority to Mr. Stanley over Lord Hartington of 1,536, and to Colonel Wilson-Patten of 1,385.

This "heavy blow and great discouragement" was speedily followed up by another equally decisive, though numerically not so significant, in North-East Lancashire (Blackburn Hundred), where Mr. Chamberlain Starkie (brother of Mr. Legendre Nicholas Starkie, High Sheriff of the county), and Mr. J. M. Holt, of Stubley, defeated the Liberal candidates, Mr. U. K. Shuttleworth, the son of Sir J. P. Kay-Shuttleworth (formerly Secretary to the Committee of Council on Education, and, before that, a physician in Manchester by the name of Dr. I. P. Kay), and Mr. W. Fenton, formerly of Rochdale. The High Sheriff's hands as a landowner were tied by his high office, and the Liberals scraped every scrap of influence together which they could possibly bring to bear; but all in vain. The official return was: —

J. M. Holt (C)	3,619
C. Starkie (C)	3,611
U. K. Shuttleworth (R)	3,465
W. Fenton (R)	3,441

Next comes the "greatest" defeat "of all," — the result of Mr. Gladstone's experiment in South-West Lancashire. It is impossible to imagine harder or more anxious toil than that to which Mr. Gladstone gave himself wholly up for many weeks before the election. (The *Times* boasted that during one of his election expeditions in Lancashire, 50,000 words of his speeches had been telegraphed to Printing House Square.) It would not be easy to count up even the number of speeches he delivered. He was on the "stump" here, there, and everywhere, and sometimes in the same place repeatedly. It is not unlikely that his own indomitable energy cheated him into the conviction that everybody else was imbued with the same spirit, and that therefore he *must* win. He tried everything; and, in his eagerness, at last committed what one cannot help thinking was an act of gross indiscretion for which he will have to repent at leisure hereafter. In the short interval between the nomination and the polling the coming Prime Minister published "A Chapter of Autobiography," a perusal of which made even his friends exclaim, "*qui s'excuse s'accuse.*" His critic in the *Times* said: "No one of his admirers has had cause to question his political courage; but we question whether the appearance of this pamphlet will *reassure them as to his discretion.*" * * * "Nor do we feel sure that the appearance of this *Chapter of Autobiography* will be the least of its unlucky consequences. Without affecting to be Cassandras, we cannot help seeing in his present declarations on Establishments in general the dragon's teeth which may be prolific of future troubles to him and pamphlets to us." It is no part of one's purpose, in this place, to make more than this passing allusion to Mr. Gladstone's latest *escapade*, and it is only alluded to at all for the purpose of showing that he strove to get in for Lancashire as if his life depended on the issue. He displayed all this overmastering anxiety on the hustings, at the nomination, when his turn came to speak. He begged and implored the electors to return him to Parliament. Mark his impassioned appeal: —

"And now, gentlemen, some persons have said that you need not return me for South-West Lancashire, because I may sit somewhere else. They say that I had *better go away from the place where I was born, from the place where I was bred, from the place where my family have been for ninety years, and where they still pursue the honourable commerce of this country.* You may just as well, in my opinion, say, 'I will turn a man out of his proper house because somebody else will have the charity to take him in *as a beggar and a vagrant. I don't, gentlemen, desire to be a Parliamentary vagrant.* The nation, it is true, has pronounced that our policy is planted as firmly as the lions in that crowd. But, gentlemen, my ambition is not merely to have a seat in Parliament. My ambition is to have *that seat which you are going to give me.* I agree with my friends who have warned me that time is flying, and I will ask you to listen to me no longer than while I say this. My wishes and desires have been true to you as the needle to the pole. I have not spoken a word, I have not *drawn a scrape of the pen to obtain any other seat in Parliament but yours.* And now the question for you, gentlemen, is, when the voice of the nation sounds in your ears, and speaks in accents which not even Mr. Turner or Mr. Cross can misunderstand — for I know that Mr. Cross will not deny that the battle of this election is already fought and won throughout the country — I ask you, therefore, gentlemen, not to separate yourselves from the body of the nation. You are part of England. YOU ARE GREAT; BUT ENGLAND IS GREATER. * * * * * * * * * * Voices, gentlemen, are to be weighed as well as counted; and of you, I ask with the fullest confidence, that you will accept, seal, and *grant the request*, that I may have, not merely a seat in Parliament, but that *I may be permitted and enabled to speak the words of truth and justice in the House of Commons in the name and with the authority of the men of South-West Lancashire.*"

He did become a "parliamentary vagrant." He quitted Liverpool in high dudgeon, leaving just a few lines behind him addressed to those electors who had "supported" him. And then he did "draw a scrape of the pen" addressed to the hirsute and hydrophobic electors of Greenwich, thanking them for electing him without solicitation on his part, and promising to represent them in parliament as a return meet for those who had behaved so handsomely to him at a time when he would not condescend to take the smallest notice of them. The Greenwichers must have felt highly flattered, and it is possible that, now he is First Minister, and they have had the distinguished honour of returning him again, they will embalm his note and display it in the same case which contains the coat worn by Nelson at Trafalgar. Again — "*Væ victis!*"— "*Væ victis!*" This disaster in Lancashire was the "greatest defeat of all." And yet, according to all "human" calculation, Mr. Gladstone *ought* to have won. His native town of Liverpool declared for him, and he had for a colleague in the candidature Mr. H. R. Grenfell, a near connexion of the Earl of Sefton, who is Lord Lieutenant of the County, and the owner of large property in and about Liverpool. But as Mr. Gladstone said of the Electors of South-West Lancashire: "you are great, but England is greater"; and it may with equal force be said: Liverpool is great, but the constituency of South-West Lancashire is greater; and although Mr. Grenfell's near relative is Lord Lieutenant and a

large owner of property, he does not possess the fee simple of the political and religious convictions of the men of Lancashire. The poll at its close, as declared by the sheriff, presented the true state of the case : —

Richd. Assheton Cross (C)	7,736
Chas. Turner (C)	7,676
Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone (R)	7,395
H. R. Grenfell (R)	6,934

When the *Times* saw the shocking reverse that had befallen the then Prime Minister expectant it was puzzled and confounded as much as its provincial brethren had been. But the leading journal speedily found out that " the progress of wealth tends to create a body of men leaning to the Conservative view of things, and no change in the political machinery of the country will prevent them from asserting their influence. A large part, perhaps a majority, of the wealthy merchants, a considerable minority of the manufacturers, a good proportion of the traders of all kinds will, under the action of ease and prosperity attach themselves to the party which is content with things as they are, and whose impulse is to defend rather than to attack." Done into plain English this means that the constituencies of the North looked upon Mr. Gladstone as a *dangerous* minister, and therefore they stood upon their defence. What he has proposed to do with the Church and its proprety in Ireland is held to be a sufficient indication of his recklessness ; and the *Times* was mistaken in supposing that in this conviction only a " considerable minority " of the manufacturers are of the same mind as the " wealthy merchants." We may all rest assured that the merchants and the manufacturers think alike on this momentous subject. However, what has been quoted is so near the truth that one is not disposed to be captious. But why should the leading journal have tried to break the fall of its political leader by talking about his " standing in brilliant contrast to the *obscurity* of Turner and Cross ? " It is clear that the writer knows as little as possible about either of these gentlemen. He views them from the genuine and utterly incorrigible Blackfriars point of view, which can see nothing but " obscurity " in anyone who is not either a Minister of State, a great naval or military commander, or a " city man " who is reputed to have a considerable balance at his bankers and " operates " largely. Mr. Turner has not only had a seat in the House of Commons for many years, first for Liverpool and afterwards for South Lancashire, but among the crass and

stupid savagery of the North of England he was universally known for a long period as the competent and successful administrator of the great "Dock Trust" of Liverpool. As for the " obscurity" of Mr. Richard Assheton Cross, who headed the poll, we all know that he was not generally considered " obscure " at Cambridge, that as long as he remained at the bar of the Northern Circuit he was continually winning distinction, and that he sat in two Parliaments for his native town of Preston, and while in the House was known as a thoughtful, shrewd, and intelligent speaker to whom the members on both sides listened with respect and attention ; furthermore, that he initiated, and carried through, some valuable measures of legislation. The world will hear more of Mr. Cross and come to know him before he has been long in Parliament. If the slur was cast upon these gentlemen through ignorance or forgetfulness, it is to be deplored, — if through mortification at, one must confess, a sufficiently galling and unexpected defeat, it is simply unmannerly and rather disreputable. Even when you have " no case" it is not always either wise or comely to "abuse the other side." But let it pass, and let us get on with what may still have to be said about this wonderful display of Constitutional power in the great centres of population.

Next came the election for North-East Lancashire, (the Salford Hundred) and the majorities polled for the Conservative candidates only fell a little short of the crowning triumph in North Lancashire. For many years after the passing of the Reform Act, of '32, the representation of South Lancashire was monopolised by the Liberal party. The Conservatives did not know their real strength until the great " South Lancashire Conservative Association" was set on foot, and the constituency began to be " worked." At length, when that memorable dissolution of Parliament took place, Lord Francis Leveson Egerton (afterwards first Earl of Ellesmere) and the Hon. Richard Booth Willbraham (son of Lord Skelmersdale, of Latham House) were put up by the Conservatives in opposition to Lord Molyneux and Mr. George William Wood (who once sat for Kendal). The two Conservatives were returned, and were afterwards regularly re-elected until Mr. Wilbraham died, and then Mr. William Entwisle, a Manchester merchant, took his place as the second Conservative member. This state of things continued until Sir Robert Peel put his strong parliamentary backing to flight by his measure of Corn Law Repeal. The party in South Lancashire then became disorganised, and, perhaps, it is

not too much to say, demoralised. The Conservatives, being without a leader and having lost heart, once more let in the Liberals, who represented the county for some years in the persons of Mr. William Brown of Liverpool, Mr. Robert Hyde Greg of Manchester, Mr. Alexander Henry of Manchester (the father of Mr. Snowdon Henry who, in November last, was returned as the second Conservative member), and Mr. John Cheetham of Stalybridge (the recently ejected Liberal member for Salford). At length, when the Conservative party in Parliament, under the leadership of Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli, began to regain something like its former strength, the Conservatives of South Lancashire took heart again, revived their old organisation, and set their old electioneering machinery to work. They brought forward the Hon. Algernon F. Egerton (a son of their former member, the first Earl of Ellesmere) and Mr. John William Legh, of Lyme Park, (who was returned unopposed together with Mr. E. C. Egerton for East Cheshire, last November) and both were returned by considerable majorities over their Liberal opponents. Mr. Egerton has sat continuously, with Mr. Charles Turner, down to the present time, but at the General Election of 1865, Mr. Gladstone, who had just been rejected by the University of Oxford, was substituted for Mr. Legh by a small majority. As soon as Parliament was prorogued last Autumn, with the certainty of a dissolution in October or November, the note of preparation for the coming contest sounded throughout the Country — nowhere with a less "uncertain sound" than in Lancashire, which was to be sub-divided into four constituencies, returning, in the aggregate eight members. Every kind of menace was uttered, every expedient resorted to, to deter the Conservative party from attempting to carry all four divisions: but in vain. The upholders of the Constitution knew their strength and resolved to put it forth, — we now know with what entire and perfect success. True, it was never doubted even by his opponents that Mr. Algernon Egerton was secure in his seat. Not only was he closely identified with the commercial and manufacturing interests of the district, as head of the great Bridgewater Trust, but he was a tried man, and in a parliamentary life of ten years duration had proved himself to be not only loyal to his principles but a business-like and most valuable member. But why associate with him a second Conservative candidate? Why bring forward Mr. Snowdon Henry? Why try to grasp the *whole* representation of the county? Why

not let in a Liberal or two, — say, Mr. Gladstone in the South-West and Mr. Frederick Peel in the South-East? The Conservatives were vehemently assured that they were aiming at too much, and could not possibly succeed. At length all the divisions of the county had been carried except the South-East. It was the last trench of the Radicals, and it proved to be the grave of all their hopes. They had put up the Right Hon. Frederick Peel (the rejected of Bury at the previous General Election) and Mr. Henry Yates Thompson (who contested the Southern Division in connection with Mr. Gladstone in 1865), and they drew comparisons between the pretensions of the two Conservative candidates and the "administrative abilities" of Mr. Peel and the "superior claims" of Mr. Thompson. Up to the very last moment they felt certain to succeed with the former. The result proved how deplorably they had misjudged the temper of the constituency. In the end, the case stood thus. —

Hon. A. F. Egerton (C)	8,290
Mr. Snowdon Henry (C)	8,012
Rt. Hon. F. Peel (R)...	7,024
Mr. H. Y. Thompson (R)...	6,953

Which gave Mr. Egerton a majority of 1,266, and Mr. Henry a majority of 988 over Mr. Peel, — a fact which lifted Lancashire into the proud position of being the most Conservative county in England.

The "leading journal" of the Liberal party was again obfuscated. All it could do was to declare that this state of things "could not last," (we shall see about that!) and that a different complexion would be put on the face of things at the "next" General Election. It is the old story, — the venerable catholicon for all present evils. When West-Kent, the "semi-metropolitan constituency," was lost to the Liberals, the *Times* found out that "the results of the county elections teach a lesson which ought to be remembered hereafter. When Mr. Disraeli first proposed to subdivide counties we protested against the plan and pointed out its danger. Kent, with its three divisions, has *returned six Conservatives*, although in every division Liberals have run their antagonists hard. Can it be doubted that with two divisions returning three members each we should have had a juster representation of the county, and have helped to make a House of Commons composed of more stable elements, and so affording greater strength to whatever Government possessed the confidence

of the country ?" This is neither more nor less than advocating the "three-cornered" plan for counties, — a plan denounced and ridiculed equally by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright even for large boroughs. The truth is that as far as the balance of parties is concerned, the introduction of the three-cornered system into the larger counties would soon bring matters into pretty much the same position as that in which they are now. There would be compromises to avoid expense, as was the case last November in Dorsetshire, where the Conservatives, being in the ascendant, let in the Hon. Mr. Portman as third member. The result would simply be this — that the dominant party (be it Conservative or be it Liberal) would always return two members to their opponents' one ; and how this sort of thing could give greater stability to any Government, except that which did not require it, or was likely to have a very narrow majority indeed, one is at present not quite able to understand. What could be done with Lancashire on this plan ? Would it be deprived of two members, or would an extra one be given to it ? It might have been proposed to relegate the county to two divisions, each returning four members — if the election in November had not clearly shown that the result must have been the same, seeing that by the perfectly simple operation of adding Mr. Egerton's and Mr. Henry's majorities in the South-East to Mr. Cross's and Mr. Turner's in the South-West, and Mr. Stanley's and Mr. Patten's in the North to Mr. Holt's and Mr. Starkie's in the North-East, the only effect would have been to greatly swell the aggregate majorities of the party in the ascendant — the Conservative party. The *Times* seems to forget that one object in framing the new Reform Act was to get rid of "unweildy" constituencies, such as those of Lancashire must have been. But all this is the mere suggestion of a moment of mingled irritation and despondency, and will soon be forgotten among other wild schemes. The truth is that the Liberals shrink from a candid recognition of the master fact that the majorities against them in the counties have, in the prevailing anxiety for the safety of the institutions of the country with which the community is filled, either been created or greatly increased by the 12*l.* occupation franchise ; and they might as well make a virtue of necessity and confess the truth at once. It is that lowering of the franchise for which they so long clamoured that has beaten them in a crisis of unusual gravity — a crisis brought about by the unscrupulous rashness of their leader.

After a few days' reflection it was, at last, frankly admitted that the Conservative county members were to the Liberal in something like the proportion of seventeen to six. Lancashire had elected eight Conservatives and not one Liberal. Cheshire, Kent, Norfolk, Somerset, had elected six Conservatives a piece and not one Liberal. Other counties had returned their four, their three, their two "Conservative champions," and "with one exception (Cornwall) there was not a single county in England which had not secured at least one Conservative representative. "In 14 out of the 40 English counties the Conservatives engross all the representation. In 15 more they have three out of four, two out of three, or five out of six. In nine they divide the representation equally. In only one, Herefordshire, they are in a minority. There are 126 Conservative county members against 45 Liberal. The votes in the four divisions of Lancashire were 26,500 Conservatives against 23,200 Liberals, and pretty nearly the same proportions have been kept in the other counties where there have been contests ; but this part of the subject will be arrived at when the borough elections are dealt with, which had better be done at once.

The first case of a borough election in the North of England— hitherto held by the "great united" to be the really Liberal, and therefore most intelligent, quarter of the Kingdom — that strikes the attention, is the issue of the contest in the great city of Manchester. Never since Manchester was enfranchised in 1832 have the Conservative party been strong enough to return a candidate. Their first candidate in opposition to Mr. Mark Philips and Mr. Poulett Thompson (afterwards Lord Sydenham) was Mr. John Thomas Hope, a son of the Earl of Hopetown, and although he did not succeed, he ran his opponents hard. In after years (for the borough has been almost always contested) among the Conservative candidates were Mr. Gladstone himself, (who was put up against Mr. Poulett Thompson), Sir George Murray, Mr. Benjamin Braidley (an ex-boroughreeve of the town), Mr. William Entwisle (afterwards member for South Lancashire), Admiral the Hon. Joseph Denman and Mr. George Loch, Q.C. (recently returned for the Wick Burghs), but none of these ever came within many hundreds of their Liberal opponents. And yet there was a compact Conservative phalanx four or five thousand strong which could always throw itself into the scale in favour of the least objectionable of the Liberal candidates, and it did so more than

once of late years, after it had ceased to run candidates of its own. It helped the late Sir John Potter and Mr. Aspinal Turner to eject Mr. Milner Gibson and Mr. John Bright — neither of whom has ever shown in Manchester since. It also returned the late Mr. Edward James, Q.C., by a very large majority, on the ground of his Churchmanship, in 1865. The Liberals have always scouted the idea that the more intelligent portion of the working classes in Manchester were devoted to the Church, and yet on the show of hands being taken in 1865 it was immensely in favour of Mr. James. Now that this class of artisans has received the franchise it has proved its devotion to the Church and the institutions of the country, by materially helping to return the Conservative, Mr. Hugh Birley, by an enormous majority at the head of the poll. Mr. Birley and his family have spent thousands upon thousands on the building of churches and in promoting and extending the Church's work in that populous district, and the intelligent working men of Manchester did not suffer themselves to be unmindful of these good deeds in November last. The mayor's return at the close of the poll stood thus : —

Birley (C)	15,486
Bazley (R)	14,192
Jacob Bright (R)	13,514
Hoare (C)	12,684
E. Jones (R)	10,662
Henry (R)	5,236

It was a severe blow to the "Great United Liberals" to find the Conservative at the head of the poll by so immense a majority as 1,294 over Mr. Bazeley, and 1,972 over Mr. Jacob Bright. What could be said in mitigation of such a defeat ? It was absolutely necessary to invent *some* excuse, and so it was insisted that the "third vote" was responsible for everything. How that could be it was most difficult to understand, seeing that Mr. Birley polled nearly two thousand votes more than Mr. Jacob Bright. Only an analysis of the polling sheets showing how the votes were split between the candidates can determine how the matter really stood. Mr. Birley is a native of the city, thoroughly well known and highly esteemed. Mr. Hoare is a London banker, and therefore not so well known, or the probability is that he would have supplanted Mr. Jacob Bright. One suspects that Mr. Bright and his now "right honourable" brother of Birmingham have good reason to dislike the "three cornered" system, for they were *both of them*

lowest on the poll of the successful candidates in Manchester and Birmingham, and may therefore owe their seats to the "third vote."

But there was no third seat in the sister borough of Salford, and yet the two Conservative candidates were returned. Until the new Reform Act became law, Salford only returned one member, and no Conservative was ever returned from 1832 down to last November. To be sure, at the first election after the passing of that Act the late Radical, Mr. Brotherton, beat the late Conservative, Mr. William Garnett, of Lark Hill, and Quernmore Park, by a majority of two — one of the two votes being Mr. Brotherton's own. They afterwards went before an Election Committee, but the result remained the same. Afterwards, Lord Maidstone contested the seat with Mr. Brotherton, but to no purpose. Other Conservatives were successively but not successfully started, and Mr. Brotherton kept the seat until his death ; and then he was succeeded by the Right Hon. W. N. Massey, the recently rejected of Liverpool. Then Mr. Massey became Finance Minister in India, and he was succeeded in the representation by Mr. John Cheetham, of Stalybridge, formerly member for South Lancashire. Mr. Cheetham sat for a short time, until last November, when, under the new Act, Salford became entitled to return two members. When the Conservatives put up two candidates, Mr. Cawley and Mr. Charley, the Liberals laughed them to scorn. Salford had always been *so* Radical, and would become even more so with an enlarged constituency. The Tories had never been able to return one member, what on earth could have put it into their heads to expect to return two ! Here again the Radicals entirely overlooked or mistook the strong attachment of the intelligent part of the working classes for the Protestant Constitution in Church and State ; and at the close of the poll the numbers stood thus : —

Cawley (C)	6,312
Charley (C) ... —	6,181
Cheetham (R)	6,141
Rawson (R)	6,118

Certainly the majorities were not large, but they were sufficiently decisive to mark the current of opinion in the large boroughs of the North. The Liberals were dismayed at this result, and down to this day they have never been able to account for it in a manner satisfactory to their vanity and their notions of the "fitness of things." As for the "three-cornered" argument, the fact that

only two members could be returned put it clean out of the question.

The Liberals succeeded by that plan in Liverpool, and by it alone, — or Mr. William Rathbone would never have been returned as the third member, — the two Conservatives, Mr. Graves and Lord Sandon having polled respectively 16,766 and 16,222 votes, whereas Mr. Rathbone (R) polled only 15,337, and Mr. Massey (R) 15,017 votes. Could anything more strongly shew the ascendancy of Constitutional principles in this, one of the foremost, of the great towns of the North.

In Preston, where the Roman Catholic element is peculiarly potent, there was no "third vote," so again the issue was simple and direct, and quite free from any electioneering complexities. The two Conservative candidates — Mr. E. Hermon and Sir T. G. Fermor Hesketh (the former member, with the Hon. Frederick Stanley,) polled respectively 5,812 and 5,726 votes; whereas the Radicals, Mr. J. F. Leese and Lord Edward Howard (Roman Catholic), only polled respectively 4,689 and 4,639 votes. Considering the size of the constituency these majorities were enormous.

Blackburn, again, which was once thought to favour Radicalism, had nothing to do with the "third vote," and yet it returned the Conservative candidates, Mr. W. H. Hornby and Mr. J. Feilden, by 4,980 and 4,887 votes respectively, over the two Radicals, Mr. J. G. Potter and Major Feilden, who respectively polled 4,387 and 4,184 votes.

With respect to Bolton, for a long series of years the Conservative party there has not been able to return more than one Conservative, and even that one, not without some difficulty. But now that the constituency has become enlarged, they have returned both their candidates — having rejected the old Liberal member, Mr. Barnes, by a larger majority than he could ever secure against his opponents in even his most palmy days. The numbers stood thus at the close: —

Hick (C)	6,062
Colonel Gray (C)	5,848
Barnes (R)	5,451
Pope (R)	5,436

All things considered, this victory in Bolton was significant of the state of sound opinions in the Lancashire boroughs.

At Oldham, the two former Radical members were returned by

very narrow majorities over Mr. John Morgan Cobbett, who for many years represented the town, and the Conservative candidate, Mr. Serjeant Spinks. It is not unlikely that both Messrs. Cobbett and Spinks will be seated on petition, for it is understood that a considerable number of the votes recorded for the Radical candidates cannot stand the searching effects of a scrutiny. Other disabling causes are also alleged against the Radicals. It will be seen that the contest was very close — the members being respectively for the Radical candidates, Messrs. Hibbert and Platt, 6,140 and 6,122, and for their opponents, Messrs. Cobbett and Spinks, 6,102 and 6,072.

The return for Warrington may be either void altogether or the Conservative candidate, Mr. Gilbert Greenall, should be put in the place of the Radical, Mr. Rylands. Mr. Greenall's committee at the close of the poll gave him 2,055 votes against Mr. Rylands' 1,977, which showed a majority of 78 for Mr. Greenall. Even Mr. Rylands' committee admitted that Mr. Greenall had a majority. When the poll-sheets came to be added up, it turned out that a large number of votes — nearly 100 — for Mr. Greenall had been omitted early in the morning, and so apparently Mr. Rylands had the majority. But of course Mr. Greenall will be restored to his rightful position as member for Warrington, for which place he has sat for many years; or the blundering in No. 1 booth may be pronounced an accident not voiding the election, and he who really won be obliged to succumb.

One of the newly-created boroughs in Lancashire, Burnley, has returned a Radical; but the other, Stalybridge and Duckinfield, the place from which Mr. Cheetham, the rejected of Salford, hails, returned a Conservative by a large majority — Mr. Sidebottom (C) having polled 2,407 votes, whereas Mr. Buckley (R) polled only 2,078. Clitheroe has also returned Mr. Assheton (C) by 760 votes over Mr. Roundell (one of the new superfine young Whig doctrinaires), who polled 693 votes.

We have now come to the end of such contests in the Lancashire boroughs as seem to call for comment. But there is reserved one notable example to the last — that of Ashton-under-Lyne, where Mr. Milner Gibson, the President of the Board of Trade in the last "great United Liberal" administration, was rejected by a very significant majority. Like many other boroughs in Lancashire created by the Reform Act of 1832, Ashton never returned a Conservative until last November. From the enfran-

chisement of the borough until the period at which Mr. Gibson was turned out of Manchester, Mr. Hindley was the Liberal member. It was on his retirement that room was made for Mr Gibson. His seat was several times disputed — once by Mr. Helps, the present clerk of the Privy Council — but never successfully. It was thought by the Radical party that Mr. Milner Gibson was equally secure. But all his ability and fluency, all his agreeable *bonhomie*, all his former official *prestige*, did not suffice to save him from being rejected by the newly-enlarged constituency. Mr. T. W. Mellor, a local manufacturer of Conservative principles disputed the seat with him in November, and at the close of the poll the returns were : —

Mellor (C)	2,318
Gibson (R)	2,109

Which, it will be admitted, was a most substantial majority in favour of Constitutional principle. After the defeat of Mr. Gladstone himself, it was the crowning disaster of the Liberals in the North of England. It was impossible to explain it away or palliate it in any shape ; so the Liberal press began to cast about for consolation in some other shape and in another quarter. At length they thought they had made the discovery that although the Conservatives had carried almost everything before them in Lancashire, on the total return of the polling for county and boroughs, the extended franchise had furnished more votes for them than for their opponents. How they contrived to make it out no one has the least conception. But one need not trouble oneself much about this, for here is a refutation ready to one's hand extracted from a letter in a trustworthy local daily paper * : —

"There are Radicals boasting at this moment that the number of votes recorded for their candidates in this county was considerably greater than the number of votes recorded for the Tories ; but this, like their boasts generally, explodes at the touch of truth. There are fourteen boroughs and four divisions of the county, in all eighteen distinct polls. The total number of Tories contesting was thirty, and the total number of Radicals was thirty-one ; and leaving out Warrington on both sides, the total votes given for all the Tories, whether successful or not, were 185,390, and for the Radicals 175,019, being an excess of votes for the Tories of 10,371."

Stepping across the boundaries of Lancashire into the adjacent northern counties, we find that in Cheshire Mr. Laird the Conservative member for Birkenhead beat off Captain Osborne, the

* Letter signed "Investigator" in *Manchester Courier* of Dec. 1.

Radical, by a majority of 2,935 against 2,056 ; that in Stockport, for the first time for a long series of years a Conservative was returned, and that too, at the head of the poll — Mr. Tipping having polled 2,722 votes against Mr. J. B. Smith's 2,677 and Sir E. Watkin's 2,615. Sir E. Watkin therefore went to the wall. With a little better management and organization, probably Mr. Ambrose, the second Conservative candidate, might have been returned with Mr. Tipping, seeing that he was very close up on the poll. In the city of Chester, Mr. H. C. Raikes the Conservative candidate who contested the representation, unsuccessfully, with W. H. Gladstone, at the former election, was returned with the Earl of Grosvenor — beating Mr. Salisbury the next highest Liberal candidate, by a majority of 935.

Passing into Cumberland, it seems that owing to a coalition between the Whigs and the very advanced Liberals, Mr. Hodgson, the old Conservative member, was thrown out by a narrow majority of 22. But Mr. Hodgson and his party had a swift revenge. The election for East Cumberland had still to take place. No time was lost. Mr. Hodgson was announced as the Conservative candidate in opposition to the old Liberal members, Mr. Howard and Mr. Marshall, and at the close of the poll Mr. Hodgson was at the head of it by a majority of 98 over Mr. Howard, and 247 over Mr. Marshall. Now, remembering that Mr. Marshall had been more than forty years in Parliament, and had sat for East Cumberland for twenty-one years, this was a sore and bitter disaster for the Liberal party in the border county of Cumberland. But not only were they rightly served in accordance with the canons of "poetic justice," but, by their conduct in Carlisle, they enabled the party of the Constitution to vindicate its principles in a striking manner.

The writer has now, as he humbly believes, fairly and temperately laid before his readers the results of the General Election in the great centres of population ; and he is satisfied that, although the party of the Constitution has been left in a greater minority in the new House of Commons than they were in the last, as far as mere numbers are concerned, they have won a most substantial victory in obtaining a sanction to their principles from most of those large constituencies of the country whose combined wealth and intelligence no Minister, be he whom he may, can afford to disregard. Mr. Gladstone has his majority, derived from a multitude of small constituencies, influenced in their choice of represen-

tatives by a variety of causes, local and otherwise, and not by the overruling power of those great principles which have governed the conscience, the wealth, and the intelligence of the great centres of population ; and, in one of these, he himself has fought out the battle to the bitter end, only to be ignominiously defeated where he ought to have found his greatest strength. In this last great contest he has been "shorn" and lost all his strength for evil. He has arrayed before him in the House of Commons a compact mass of the weight and worth of the nation. He has neither tact, nor skill, nor temper to handle his majority, and lead his hosts to victory. In his hands, his following will be as a rope of sand. It does not fall within the scope of the design of the present paper to treat this part of a most interesting topic, or one might deal at once with those indications of disagreement among Mr. Gladstone's followers which have already begun to show themselves. Suffice it to say that the General Election was barely over when (immediately his defeat in South-West Lancashire became known) one of the most thoughtful and moderate of the Liberal journals gave utterance to its misgivings in these expressive sentences : —

"Mr. Gladstone's friends will probably urge on him the necessity of being exceedingly circumspect, and the result of the election in South-West Lancashire may have contributed to their uneasiness. In what Mr. Gladstone calls 'the general march of affairs,' the circumstance that he is, by a mere 'accident of history,' the leader of the Liberal party, is, however, a trivial objection. It is not for the Conservatives of the present day to talk about consistency. But weakness of parties tends to a confusion of ideas, and it would be a national misfortune now, when so much depends on progress in a right direction, if the Liberal majority in Parliament were to be mismanaged, as the Liberal majority which Lord Palmerston bequeathed to his successors was, and mainly through personal infirmities. We have but repeated what everybody is saying. The apprehension which has been expressed on every side cannot be ignored, and, perhaps unreasonably, it has been naturally enough intensified by an event the moral effect of which can hardly be calculated. Since Mr. Gladstone's defeat his friends have made no secret of the causes of their anxiety."

One can add nothing to the force of this timely warning even if it were one's interest, in a party sense, to do so ; but we must all of us see in it a pleasing confirmation of that confidence in the safety of the institutions of the country which are derived from the great and salient issues of the General Election.

One word about "Disestablishment and Disendowment." In the last months of the moribund Parliament Mr. Gladstone drew

forth this scheme and conjured with it. The majority of the House of Commons were hoodwinked and cheated by it. He then went with it to the country, and, without doubt, succeeded with it, for a time. But it is rapidly turning into a serpent in his hand. Not improbably it will prove the instrument of destruction to him and his followers, and, at no distant day, its poison will become a festering and fermenting element of discord that will produce a disruption of the "United" Liberal party greater than ever. Sir Robert Peel's opponents always pronounced Ireland to be his "difficulty." This factious creation of his old pupil's brain will turn out to be more than a difficulty. During his long electioneering campaign Mr. Gladstone rivalled even his new and strange colleague, Mr. Lowe, in the uncompromising spirit of his enmity to the Church in Ireland. Only his aversion to profane illustrations prevented him from exclaiming, also: "Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground ?" No sooner, however, had the Right Honourable Gentleman won the victory with this Shibboleth of his, than his friends began to discover that the effect of its use was likely to become as destructive to his own ambition and the hopes of his party as the original use of the word itself was fatal to the Ephraimites of the old Dispensation. No sooner had the country delivered its hasty verdict and Mr. Disraeli had resigned than the *Times** began to discover that the "difficulty of disendowment lies in the determination of the trusts upon which the portion of ecclesiastical property reserved for the use of the Disestablished Church shall be held, and these trusts must be defined solely with reference to the wishes of the English Churchmen of Ireland" ; and that "these are the results to which an examination of the problem before the Legislature appears to carry us." Passing lightly, for the moment, over the *Spoliation* part of the scheme, other "difficulties" start up in the mind of the writer touching the effects of Disestablishment. For instance : "it is the peculiar distinction, if not the peculiar glory, of the English Church that any Englishman is a member of it who claims the privileges of membership. The initiatory rite of baptism can be denied to no child brought to the font. The churches are open, at least, during the stated hours of worship, and entrance can be denied to no one who desires to join in their worship," and so on,— all of which shews that a multitude of insuperable difficulties were never looked honestly in the face *until* Mr. Gladstone had won his

* Leading article of the *Times*, Dec. 16, 1868.

party victory and found himself bound to the responsibilites of office, and fairly under recognizances to prosecute the scheme by means of which he had ascended to the first seat in the Cabinet. On the following day,* the same journal proceeds: "We have suggested that upon the disendowment of the Irish Church the residue of the property of the Establishment left in the hands of the present holders must be settled upon trusts corresponding to the wishes of all those who profess themselves Churchmen in Ireland, and that this principle will lead to the result that the reserved funds must be set aside for the maintenance of the worship and the inculcation of the doctrines in the Prayer Book, formularies and Articles of the Church of England. Is this result compatible with Disestablishment?" &c., &c., &c. Sir Roundel Palmer had, by his conduct, already suggested the difficulties and answered the questions. A far-seeing lawyer, as well as a high-minded gentleman, he refused to join Mr. Gladstone's administration. He could not sanction so flagrant and so perilous a violation of the laws and rights of property as that contemplated by the Premier's original scheme, and therefore he felt that his honour as a man was pledged not to accept office with those who had committed themselves to courses so flagitious—even though his reward would certainly have been a peerage and the highest judicial place in the realm. If even one man possessed of sound knowledge and sterling principles of rectitude becomes a recusant in such a case his example is most potent. So it has proved here, — as we must all see by the expressed *afterthoughts* of the ministerial press, and, most probably, of Mr. Gladstone himself.

The same writer, in the article just quoted, hits upon a reason which will certainly commend itself to the ultra-ritualistic section of the Church Clergy, who are always complaining of what they are pleased to call the "tyranny of the State." He says that disestablishment must mean, among other things, "the suppression of the Courts of Law set apart for the exclusive hearing of ecclesiastical causes." It is just this "suppression" which the very "high" clergy long to see accomplished, thinking (as is supposed) that Disestablishment will make them free to exercise what has been called a priestly "tyranny" over the consciences of the people. But they are seasonably reminded that although the Ecclesiastical Courts might disappear, the administration of the Church in Ireland

* Leading article of the *Times*, Dec. 17, 1868.

"would become subject to the Courts of Equity just as the administration of all the voluntary religious bodies of England possessing any property has been controlled by the Lord Chancellor"; and, further, that if a member of the English Church be aggreived by what he considers to be false doctrine or condemns as an unauthorized form of worship, he would "file a bill in Equity praying for an injunction to restrain the teaching of the doctrine, or the continuance of the practice be repudiated." All these things were discovered *after* Mr. Gladstone had secured his majority and become Prime Minister. Now, what is done with respect to the Church in Ireland to-day may be done with respect to the Church of England to-morrow; and it was hoped that what was done in the one case would be done in the other. It is possible that Mr. Gladstone, being one of the ultra "high" party in the Church, contemplated such a result when he proposed to make his experiment on what he might call the "*corpus vile*" in Ireland, and that doctrines and practices, and the clergy themselves in England would, in the end, become "free."

The Prime Minister will find that on the reassembling of Parliament all these things will be very freely discussed and very determined action taken upon them, even by some of his own supporters. Thus "Disestablishment and Disendowment" will become his "difficulty"; and this source of embarrassment will have to be added to that which must inevitably arise from the fact of his having the representatives of the great centres of population and wealth against him.

R. S. S.

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